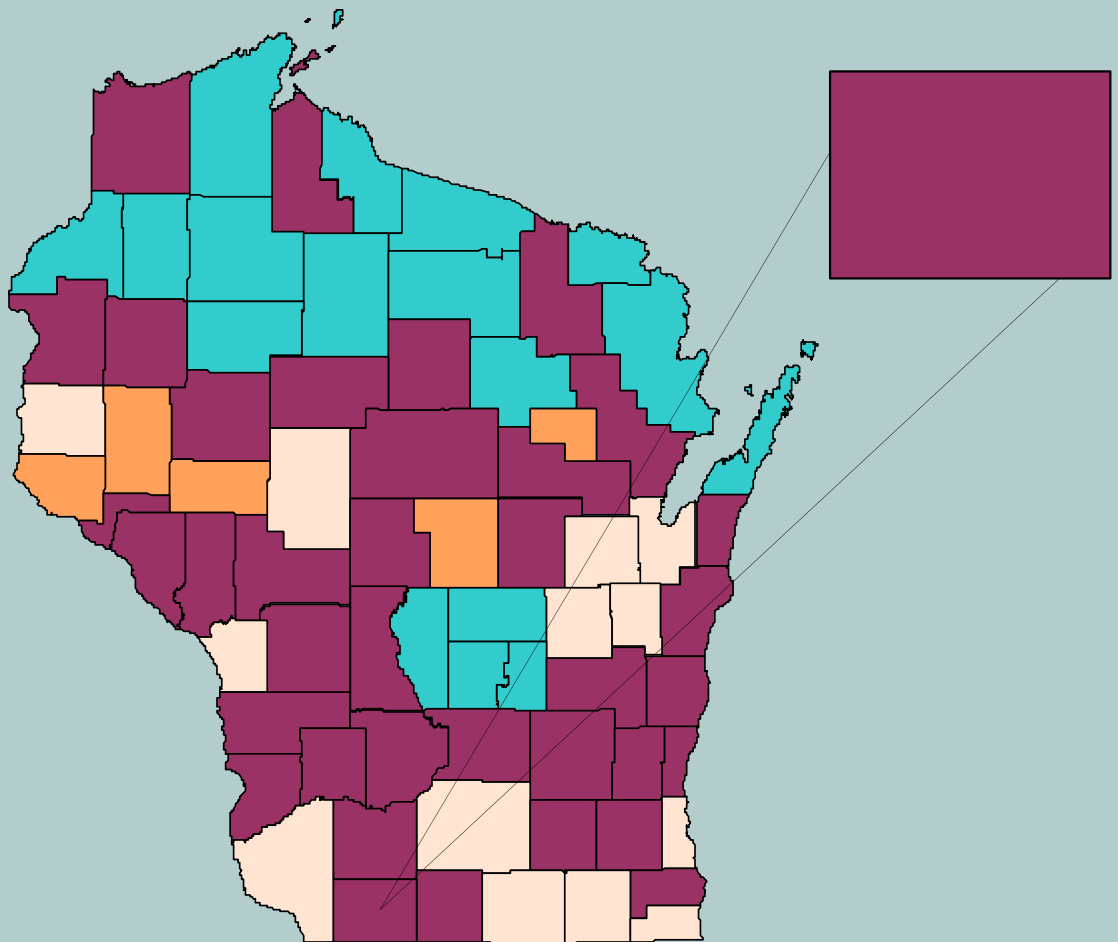


# Lafayette County Workforce Profile

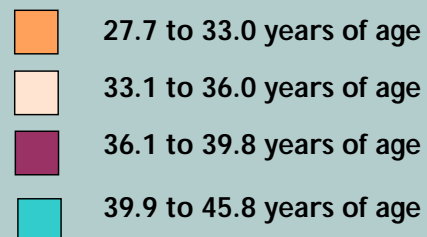
Median Age by County, 2000



Your complete  
guide to the  
state of the  
labor force of  
today and a  
glimpse into  
the economy of  
tomorrow.



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
October 2002 (rev. 4/2003)



Source: Census 2000 of the United States



## County Population

The population of Lafayette County increased by 0.5 percent between 2000 and 2001, adding 77 residents to the county's population of 16,214. In comparison, both the state of Wisconsin and United States grew by 0.7 percent over the same time period. The patterns of growth experienced over the past year differ significantly from the pattern of growth experienced in over the course of the past decade.

In comparing the population count from the 1990 and 2000 Census, we find that Lafayette County added 63 residents, or less than one percent of the population. In contrast, the state and nation grew by 9.6 percent and 13.1 percent, respectively. This suggests that the county's population has stagnated, to a certain extent. This stagnation is the result of a number of demographic and economic factors that shall be explored in great detail in this profile.

The estimated annual change in population in 2001 suggests that Lafayette County will grow at a four to five percent decennial rate in the next ten years. In analyzing this growth more closely, we find that the change in the county's population is a function of a number of components. The most recent increase

in population in the county was primarily a result of migration into the county, as is has been the trend in many counties in the state. Over the course of the year, 54 new residents moved into the county. In comparison, 23 new residents were added to the population through a natural increase wherein the number of births in the county exceeded the number of deaths.

Shifting our focus to the municipalities in Lafayette County, we see that population changes among the ten largest municipalities show a series of divergent patterns. Among these municipalities, four experienced decreases in their population of between two and four percent, led by the Town of Wiota. Conversely, two municipalities experienced significant growth, with the Town of Benton growing by 0.9 percent, and the Town of Belmont reporting the addition of 42 new residents, or 6.2 percent in new population. When taking in context, these 42 new residents represent 54.5 percent of the new population in the county. Despite the divergence between municipalities experiencing significant growth and decline, the remainder of the largest municipalities in the county reported modest or no growth, including

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Total Population

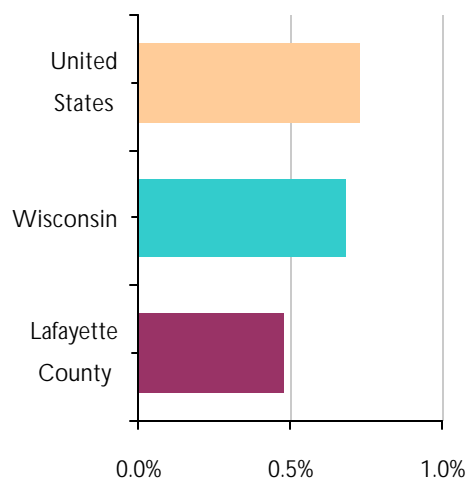
	2000 Census	January 1, 2001 Estimate	Percent change
United States	281,421,906	283,474,000	0.7%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,400,449	0.7%
Lafayette County	16,137	16,214	0.5%

### Ten Largest Municipalities

Darlington, City	2,418	2,420	0.1%
Shullsburg, City	1,246	1,247	0.1%
Benton, Village	976	983	0.7%
Wiota, Town	900	896	-0.4%
Belmont, Village	871	874	0.3%
Argyle, Village	823	821	-0.2%
Darlington, Town	757	757	0.0%
Belmont, Town	676	718	6.2%
Blanchardville, Village *	660	658	-0.3%
Gratiot, Town	653	652	-0.2%

\* Lafayette portion only

### Population Growth 2000-2001



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services, 2002

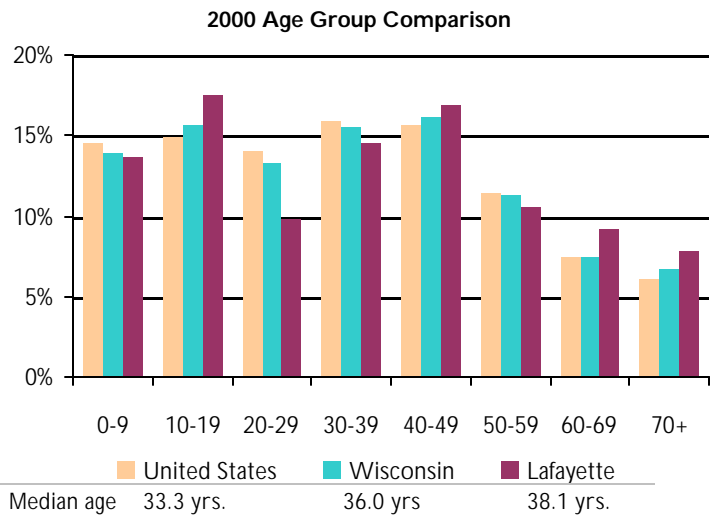


## State of Wisconsin - Lafayette County

the cities of Darlington and Shullsburg — the two largest municipalities in the county.

Again, in analyzing the change in population at the county level over the past decade, there are a number of interesting corresponding changes that have occurred the county. One of these changes has been the churning of the county's housing stock. In examining data from the 2000 census, we see that, between 1990 and 2000, 550 new housing units were constructed, accounting for 8.5 percent of the county's housing stock. In order to approximate how many of these new units do not replace existing units in the housing market, a comparison of the total number of housing units in 1990 and 2000 shows that a total of 313 new units were constructed, resulting in a more modest 5.7 percent increase in the county's housing stock.

An additional characteristic of the Lafayette County population that can be analyzed through data published in Census 2000 with significant implications for the county and its labor force is the distribution of the county's population by age. This distribution is illustrated in the chart to the right. In 2000, the median age of the Lafayette County population was

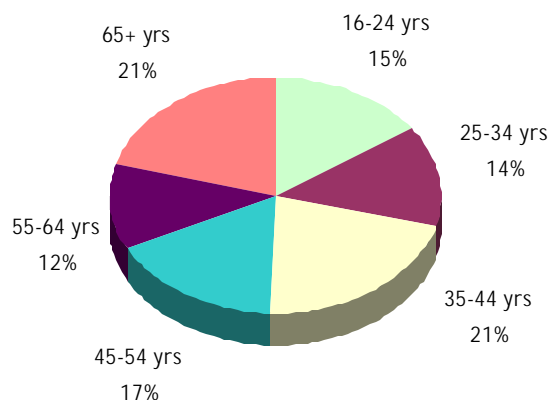


Source: US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

38.1 years, which is significantly older than either the state or nation median age of 36 and 33.3 years, respectively. The cause of this higher than average median age can be seen in the distribution as the county's population contains a greater percentage of residents aged fifty and over. Conversely, those aged between twenty and forty comprise a significantly smaller percentage of the population in Lafayette County than in either the state or nation. The large percentage of 10 to 19 year olds is promising.

## County Civilian Labor Force

**Lafayette County Labor Force Age Groups**



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

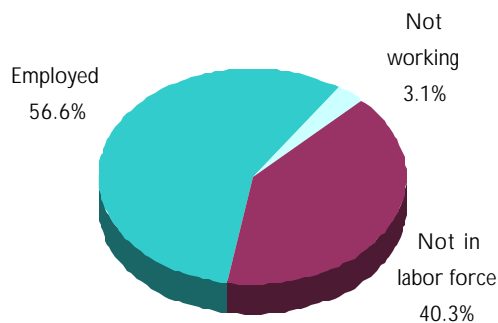
The discussion of the age distribution of the Lafayette County population above provides a natural transition to a more focused discussion of the county's labor force. The distribution to the left illustrates the composition of the county's labor force eligible population by rough age cohorts. The primary implication of this distribution is that the labor force eligible population is relatively evenly distributed among these cohorts, with exactly half of the population being under and over the age of forty five. This distribution implies that, over the next twenty years, the labor force of Lafayette County will remain relatively stable, barring any change in migration patterns as the number of workers moving into the mature years of their working lives will be sufficient to replace those in

(Continued on page 3)



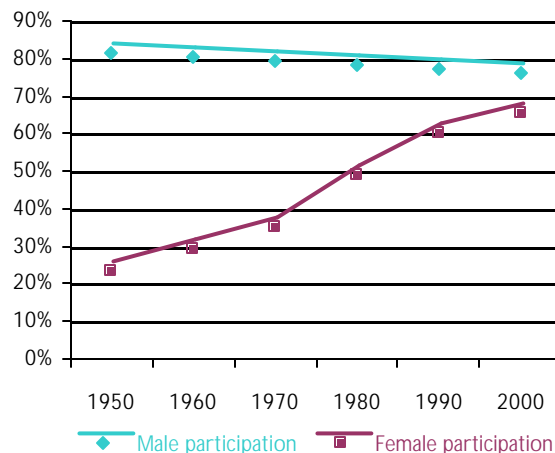
## State of Wisconsin - Lafayette County

### 2001 Labor Force Participation



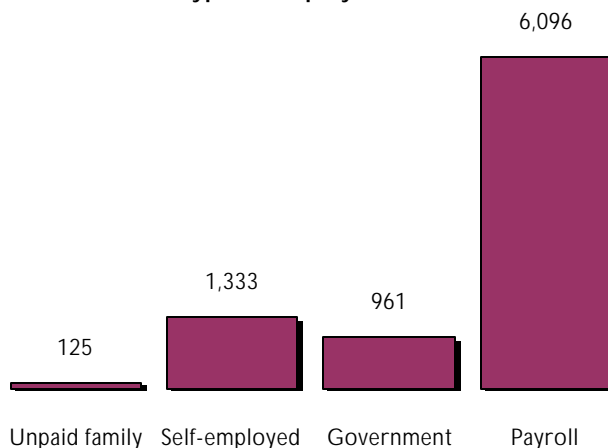
Source: Estimated from WI Dept. of Administration population estimates, Jan. 2001, US Census Bureau, and WI Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

### Labor Force Participation of Male and Female Residents



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

### Type of Employment



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

the "Baby Boom" and preceding generations, which will be entering into retirement by 2020. Additionally, given that the percentage of youth in the county is greater than the state average, perceived fears of a significant labor shortage in the foreseeable future appear to be slightly overstated.

The labor force is the sum of those employed and unemployed *that have actively sought work in the last month*. **Labor Force eligible must be 16 years or older and not a member of an institutional population** such as a prison or an armed forces member living on a military base. The term "unemployed" does not necessarily include all people who are not working. For example, those who are retired or choose not to work are not considered unemployed. The phrase "Not Working" in the graph below assumes unemployed for the purposes of this profile.

In 2001, the labor force participation rate of Lafayette County was 59.7 percent, which represents a 0.3 percent increase from 2000. In comparison, the state's labor force participation rate in 2001 was 73.5 percent, or 0.7 percent greater than 2000. The national rate of 66.9 percent was 0.3 lower than the same rate a year earlier. Much of the disparity between the county, state, and nation can be justified through a combination of factors. First, at the county has a strong economic emphasis in agriculture, losses in commodity markets, as have occurred over the past several years can greatly impact the labor force status of area farmers who are forced to reduce or eliminate production. Second, the demographic composition contains a high percentage of residents aged sixty and over, as previously discussed. Since these residents are less likely to be active in the labor force than younger workers, the percentage of those not in the labor force is greatly inflated.

An additional interesting pattern that has developed in the Lafayette County labor force that can be illustrated through an analysis of the labor force participation rate is the changing role of men and women in the workforce. Using data gathered from the past five decennial censuses, the change in the male and female labor force participation rate is illustrated above. The pattern of male labor force par-

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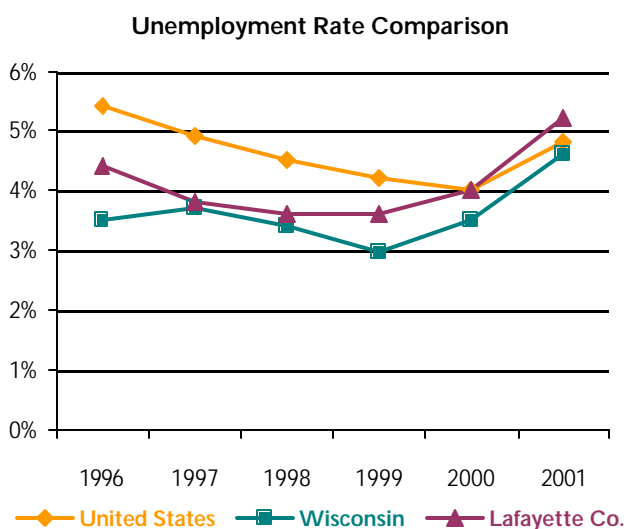


## State of Wisconsin - Lafayette County

ticipation has changed dramatically over the course of the past decade. While the rate of participation of men in the labor force remained relatively stable over the period from 1950 to 1990, this rate has declined slightly over the past decade.

In comparison, the entry of women into the workforce has increased exponentially over the past fifty years. While the social forces leading to this phenomenon have been discussed in a variety of media, the factors leading to growth over the past decade are much more economic in nature. Over the course of the past decade, total manufacturing employment, which has traditionally been a strong source of non-farm employment in the county has decreased by nearly eighteen percent, despite growing significantly through the middle of the decade. Conversely, service sector industries have reported significant employment gains in the 1990's, creating new, primarily gender-neutral career opportunities. The expectation is that these divergent patterns of growth will continue for a time, and then stagnate.

While detailed information regarding commuting

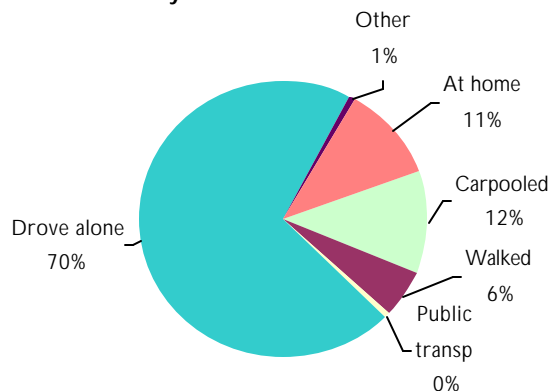


### Lafayette County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor Force	8,400	8,100	8,100	7,400	7,300	7,400
Employed	8,000	7,800	7,800	7,200	7,000	7,000
Unemployed	370	310	290	260	290	390
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	3.8%	3.6%	3.6%	4.0%	5.2%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, revised March 2002

### County Travel-to-Work Patterns



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

patterns within the county will not be updated until later this year, when more detailed commuting data is released, preliminary data from the 2000 census suggests that the automobile remains the primary means of transportation in the county, with 82 percent of the population either driving alone or carpooling a majority of the time. As for their destinations, historical commuting data suggests that workers commute primarily into Grant and Green counties to the west and east, respectively.

Shifting briefly to a discussion of the unemployed labor force, we see that the Lafayette County annual average unemployment rate has fluctuated significantly between 1996 and 2001, following a pattern unlike the pattern experienced in either the state or nation. This fluctuation suggests that growth in the county reached its economic peak slightly before either the state or nation and that the increase in unemployment in 2001 is greater.



## County Industry Employment

### Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Percent change	
							1 year	5 year
<b>Total</b>	3,690	3,676	3,793	3,784	3,674	3,685	0.3%	-0.1%
<b>Goods Producing</b>	790	750	758	755	738	725	-1.7%	-8.2%
Construction & Mining	112	120	127	122	129	159	22.6%	41.9%
Manufacturing	679	630	632	633	609	567	-6.9%	-16.5%
Durable	467	437	436	425	402	370	-8.0%	-20.7%
Nondurable	212	193	196	208	207	197	-4.8%	-7.1%
<b>Service Producing</b>	2,899	2,925	3,034	3,029	2,936	2,960	0.8%	2.1%
Transportation, Communications & Utilities	247	243	249	238	214	193	-9.8%	-21.6%
Total Trade	877	856	840	847	875	897	2.5%	2.2%
Wholesale	305	283	288	289	310	353	13.9%	15.8%
Retail	572	574	552	558	565	543	-3.8%	-5.0%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	181	193	201	200	213	216	1.7%	19.4%
Services & Misc.	428	462	550	539	456	510	11.8%	19.2%
Total Government	1,167	1,170	1,194	1,205	1,178	1,143	-2.9%	-2.0%

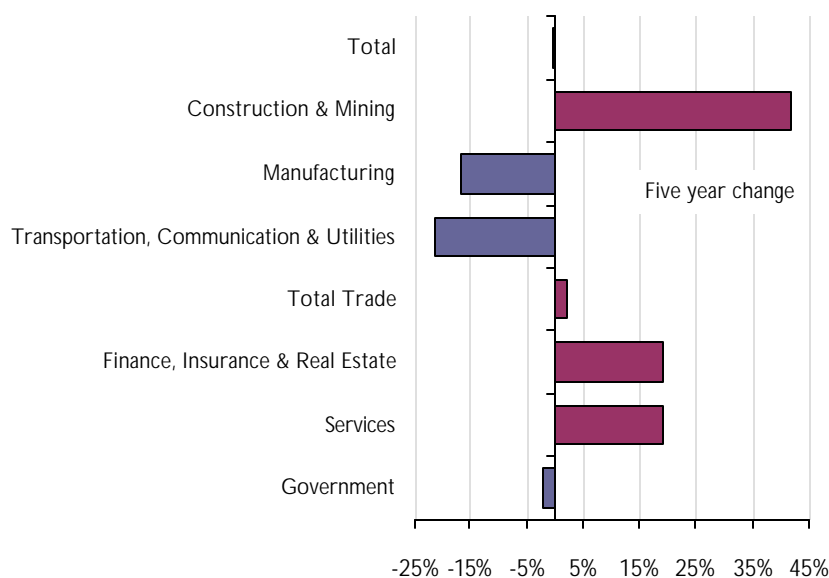
Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002

Shifting our focus to look at changes in employment in the major industry sectors in Lafayette County, we see a divergent trend of significant growth and decline over the past year. Among the industries experiencing the most significant growth were construction and mining (22.6 percent), which was spurred by demand for new residential construc-

tion, wholesale trade (13.9 percent), and services industries (11.8 percent). Among those industries experiencing significant employment losses, the transportation, communications, and utilities (-9.8 percent), durable goods (-8.0 percent), and nondurable goods (-4.8 percent) sectors shed the greatest percentage of employment. In addition, it is impor-

tant to note a pair of interesting facts. First, the largest sector in the county — government services decreased by 2.9 percent in 2001. Finally, despite these shifts, total employment increased by 0.3 percent in Lafayette County in 2001.

### Employment Change by Industry Division: 1996 to 2001



Source: WI DWD, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002

Taking a more long-term view of the county's industries, we see a similar pattern of divergent growth emerge when looking at growth over the past five years. The construction industry again paces all industries in growth at 41.9 percent of its workforce, followed by finance, insurance, and real estate, and services. Conversely, both the transportation, communications, and utilities, and manufacturing sectors lost significant percentages of their workforce. Finally, an interesting note here is that total employment actually decreased over this period.



## State of Wisconsin - Lafayette County

### Top 10 Employers

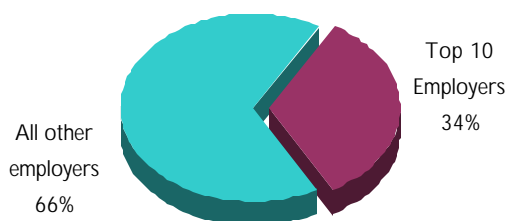
Company	Product or Service	Size
County of Lafayette	County Government Services	250-499
Autoline/Argyle Industries Inc.	Automotive Parts Manufacturer	100-249
Darlington Public School	Public School District	100-249
School District of Black	Public School District	100-249
Shullsburg Public School	Public School District	50-99
Merkle-Korff Industries Inc.	Motors and Generators	50-99
Lactalis Usa Inc.	Natural, Processed and Imitation Cheese	50-99
School District of Argyle	Public School District	50-99
Shullsburg Creamery Inc.	Dairy Products Processing	50-99
Illinois Tool Works Inc.	Tool and Die Manufacturer	50-99

### Top 10 Industry Groups

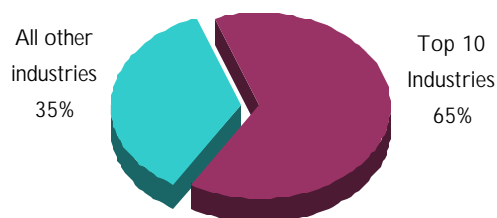
Industry Group	March 2001		Numeric change	
	Employers	Employees	1-year	5-year
Educational Services	*	*	*	*
Executive, Legislative, and General	25	482	-16	9
Transportation Equipment	*	*	*	*
Eating and Drinking Places	26	189	-36	-42
Wholesale Trade-Nondurable Goods	18	180	18	60
Food and Kindred Products	8	166	-17	-43
Wholesale Trade-Durable Goods	10	159	30	-23
Trucking and Warehousing	23	151	-16	-35
Automotive Dealers & Service Stations	10	123	11	1
Depository Institutions	9	123	-8	0

\*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

**Top 10 Employers' Share of  
Nonfarm Employment**



**Top 10 Industry Group Share  
of Nonfarm Employment**



Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, ES-202 file tape, December 2001

A list of the top employers in Lafayette County comes with a disclaimer, as it is commonly recognized that a large percentage of the workforce in the county is involved in agricultural production. Owing in part to this strong emphasis, the development of other non-farm industries has been relatively slow. As an indication of this, the size of even the largest employers in the county is relatively small, with no one firm or number of firms employ-

ing a large share of the workforce. Additionally, as a result, it is not surprising to see a strong representation by government service agencies, including Lafayette County and the Darlington, Black, Shullsburg, and Argyle School Districts among the ten largest non-farm employers in the county. Among more traditional non-farm employers, the county has a strong presence in automotive parts manufac-

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## State of Wisconsin - Lafayette County

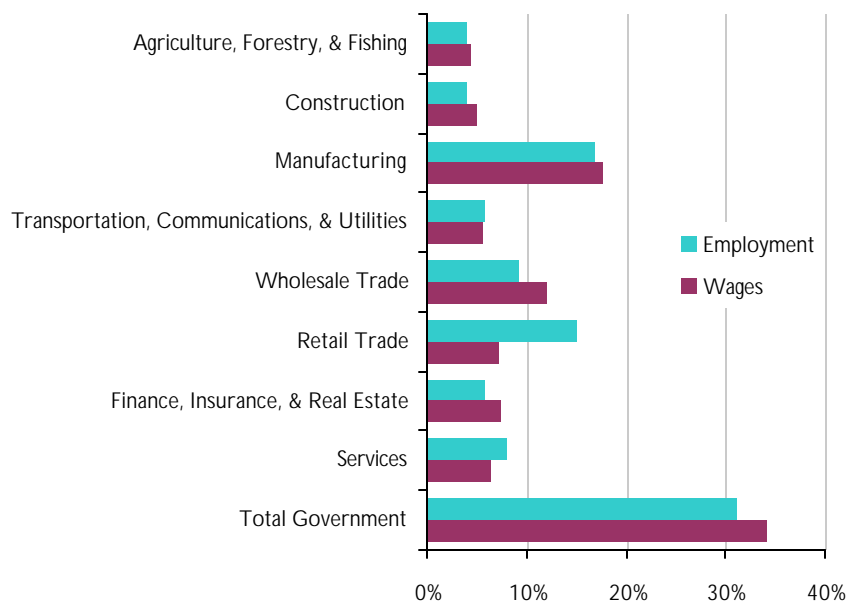
turing, as represented by the firms of Autoline/Argyle Industries, and Lactalis USA.

Of additional interest in the analysis of the largest industry sectors in the county, aside from the presence of a large number of service sector, or "soft" industry sectors is the absence of the health services industry. Given the demographic changes occurring in the county's population, it is expected that growth in the healthcare industry in the county will be significant in the next eight to ten years.

The dominance of these large firms and industry sectors, while being overshadowed by the overwhelming impact of the agriculture industry, is the significant. From an analysis of employment data from March, 2001, a third of non-farm industry employees in Lafayette County were employed by one of the ten largest employers in the county, and 65 percent of all non-farm employment was accounted for by one of the ten largest industry sectors in the county.

An additional characteristic of the county's economy and industries that has a significant bearing on the well-being of the county's labor force is the level of wages paid by employers in the county. In 2001, the annual average wage paid across all industries in Lafayette County was \$22,621, which was 26.8 percent less than the state average wage of \$30,922.

**Employment & Wage Distribution by Industry Division**



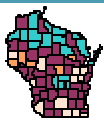
**Annual Average Wage By Industry Division**

	Lafayette Co. Annual Average Wage	Wisconsin Annual Average Wage	Percent of State Average	1-year percent change	5-year percent change
All Industries*	\$ 22,621	\$ 30,922	73.2%	3.2%	21.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	\$ 24,563	\$ 22,565	108.9%	7.5%	3.5%
Construction	\$ 28,199	\$ 39,011	72.3%	20.7%	49.3%
Manufacturing	\$ 23,503	\$ 39,739	59.1%	5.5%	32.7%
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	\$ 22,187	\$ 36,639	60.6%	-1.6%	-5.7%
Wholesale Trade	\$ 29,633	\$ 40,521	73.1%	4.2%	33.7%
Retail Trade	\$ 10,791	\$ 14,596	73.9%	7.8%	15.2%
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	\$ 29,111	\$ 40,933	71.1%	1.7%	11.8%
Services	\$ 18,108	\$ 28,775	62.9%	-11.0%	17.2%
Total Government	\$ 24,825	\$ 33,785	73.5%	1.4%	16.4%

\* Mining excluded from table since wages were suppressed to maintain confidentiality in every county

Source: WI DWD, *Employment, Wages, and Taxes Due covered by Wisconsin's U.C. Law, 2002*





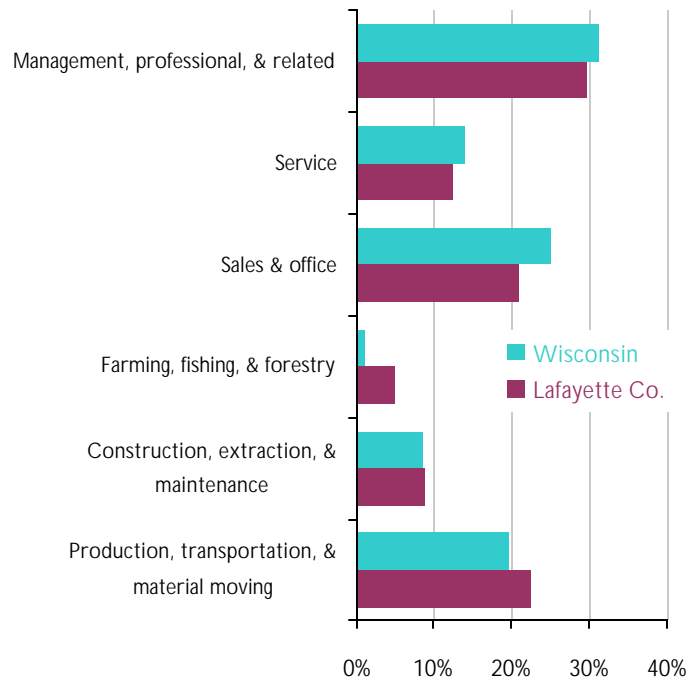
## Occupation and Education Characteristics of County Population

Two final facets of the county's population and labor force that shed light into the composition and well-being of the county's economy are the occupational distribution of the county's workforce and the educational attainment of the county's population. Each of these reinforce the traditional focus of the county's economy, as well as its strong agricultural base.

From the distribution to the right, which represents occupational data collected in the 2000 census, a greater percentage of workers in Lafayette County are employed in farming, forestry, and fishing occupations, construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations, and production, transportation, and material moving occupations than the state representation. This suggests that the industrial focus of the county is primarily based in "hard" or traditional industries, as these occupational groupings are most strongly concentrated in industries such as manufacturing, construction, and wholesale trade.

An additional interesting note regarding the county's occupational distribution is that the share of the county's working population that is engaged in management, professional, service, sales, and office occupations, while being less than the state percentage, is significantly greater than what would be expected in a county with such a strong focus in ag-

Employment by Occupation Group: 2000

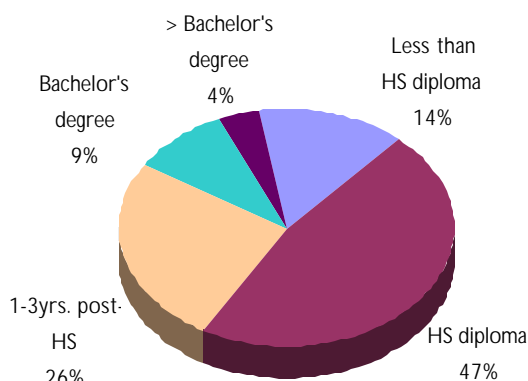


US Department of Commerce, Census 2000

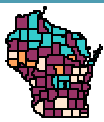
riculture. However, as industry affiliation is not included in this distribution, it is difficult to make any assumptions regarding industry trends.

The educational attainment distribution of the county's population aged twenty five and older, as represented in the chart to the left shows that the largest share of the county's population earned a high school diploma as their highest completed degree of education. Additionally, over a quarter of the county's population completed between one and three years of education following high school. This distribution is typical of what is expected in an area with a traditional industry focus, such as Lafayette County. It is important to note here that the high percentage of those completing some postsecondary education is common throughout the state and is a testament, in part, to the strong technical college system and public university system in the state. It is also important to note that, while the percentage of those with a bachelor's or advanced degree is low, these percentages are expected to grow as a result of changing commuting patterns.

Education Attainment in 2000



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*



## County Income Information

A final critical indicator of the economic health of Lafayette County is the level of income or wealth present in the county's economy. This can be measured through a variety of means, including the calculation of the median household income, the poverty level, and the per capita personal income. While each of these methods carries with it a number of advantages, the median household income is the most popular measure.

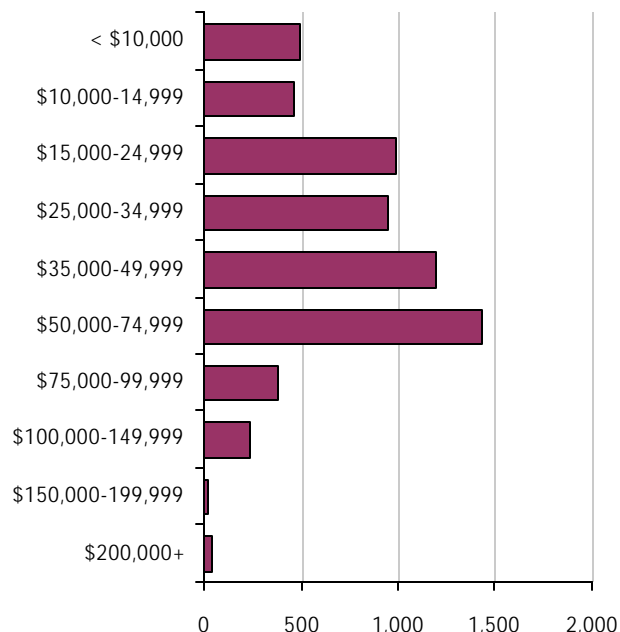
In 2000, the median household income of Lafayette County, which measures income earned in 1999 was \$37,220. This is significantly lower than the state median income level of \$43,791.

However, an analysis of the median household income distribution shows a significant number of households with incomes below \$25,000. To better measure the impact of these low incomes, the percentage of those living in poverty can be calculated. According to the 2000 census, 6.2 percent of families, 9.1 percent of individuals, and 16.4 percent of single parent families lived in poverty in the county in 1999.

Another measure of income is the per capita personal income (PCPI). Per capita income is total income divided by the total number of residents. Income includes wages earned, dividends from investments, and transfer payments from the government.

### Households by Income Range

Median household income in Lafayette Co. \$37,220

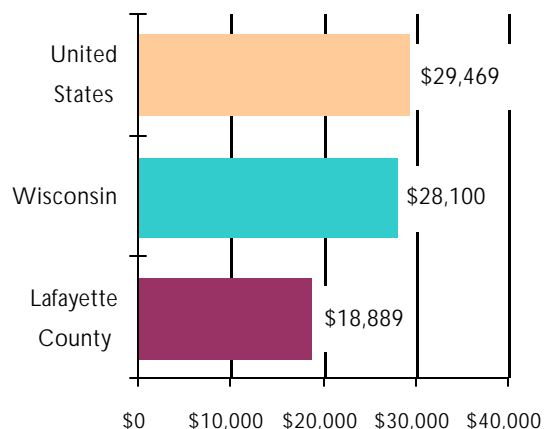


Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Per capita income can influence the type of services and housing available within a county.

In 2000, the PCPI of Lafayette County was \$18,889, which, because of low wage conditions is significantly lower than either the state or national figure.

### Per Capita Personal Income 2000



Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

### Components of Total Personal Income: 2000

